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If you have any comment, suggestion, or news item you would like to submit, send them via E-Mail to 3241437@mcimail.com or B.PASTERNAK@genie.geis.com. You can contact Newsline at +1 805-296-7180. It is a combination answering and FAX machine, if you have a FAX to send, wait for the voice prompt and press your fax-send button.

All other information and disclaimers are in the text header below.

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NEWSLINE RADIO - CBBS EDITION #131 - POSTED 07/05/94

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The following is late news about Amateur Radio for Radio Amateurs as prepared from NEWSLINE RADIO scripts by the staff of the AMATEUR RADIO NEWSLINE, INC. -- formerly the WESTLINK RADIO NETWORK. For current information updates, please call

#### Audio Version of Newsline

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Los Angeles.....	(213) 462-0008
Los Angeles (Instant Update Line).....	(805) 296-2407
Seattle.....	(206) 368-3969
Seattle.....	(206) 281-8455
Tacoma.....	(206) 927-7373
Louisville.....	(502) 894-8559
Dayton.....	(513) 275-9991
Chicago.....	(708) 289-0423

New York City..... (718) 353-2801  
Melbourne, FL..... (407) 259-4479

Electronic Hardcopy Version of Newsline

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GEnie (RTC Bulletin Board)..... m345;1  
GEnie (File Library)..... m345;3  
Dallas Remote Imaging BBS (DRIG)..... (214) 492-7573  
    In bulletin number 36  
The Midwest Connection BBS..... (701) 239-2440  
    In bulletin number 6 of the ham radio conference  
Delphi.....  
    In the ham radio conference  
Internet.....  
    In the rec.radio.info newsgroup  
    FTP: oak.oakland.edu, archive: pub/hamradio/docs/newsline  
Fidonet, RIME, Intellec, I-Link.....  
    In the Ham Radio conferences on those networks

For the latest breaking info call the Instant Update Line listed above. To provide information please call (805) 296-7180. This line answers automatically and will accept up to 30 minutes of material.

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For further information about the AMATEUR RADIO NEWSLINE, please write to us with an SASE at P.O. Box 463, Pasadena, CA 91102.

Thank You  
NEWSLINE

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Some of the hams of NEWSLINE RADIO...

WA6ITF WB6MQV WB6FDF K6DUE W6RCL N6AHU N6AWE N6TCQ K6PGX N6PNY  
KU8R N8DTN W9JUV KC9RP K9XI KB5KCH KC5UD KC0HF G8AUU WD0AKO DJ0QN  
and many others in the United States and around the globe!!!

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## HOW THE VE SCAM WORKED

More information has come to light on the activities of up to three dozen suspect volunteer examiners thought California. This is the same group of VE's that we have been reporting on since late last year. The bunch that is under government investigation for possible fraud in the testing of candidates for amateur radio licenses and upgrades. Enough information has now surfaced so that Newsline has been able to reconstruct the way in which the scam may have been operated.

To begin with, this is an overly simplified version of what most likely took place. We preface it by saying there is a lot more paperwork at a ham radio testing session than we are going to talk about, but the FCC does not see every bit of it.

As far as the FCC and Volunteer Examination Coordinators are concerned, there are actually three key documents of concern up the license processing chain. These are the completed Form 610's that bear the signature of the volunteer examiners to certify an individual passed an examination. There is a document signed by the Volunteer Examiners to certify that they are charging applicants only for expenses at the prescribed government reimbursement rate. Finally, there is a manifest listing those who attended a session and whether they passed or failed. If our guess is correct, it was by manipulating these documents that fraudulent licensing was possible.

As reported last week, the FCC suspects that allegedly corrupt VE's would either create a non existent test session or hold a legitimate one where additional people who never attended were added to the test manifest at a later date. In either case, it also appears as if names were also added of people who supposedly failed the examination. This, to keep a reasonable looking pass to failure rate.

By way of example. Suppose a legitimate session had ten people who were actually tested. The VE's suspected of wrong doing might then add on another twenty, thirty or even fifty names in the same pass to failure ratio, complete with all necessary paperwork. This material would then be sent to the VEC and then onto the FCC.

Obviously the VEC and the FCC would have had no way of knowing that about the add-ons since only those with passing grades needed to have Form 610 applications. Those who paid the asking price but didn't attend the exam sessions were in fact buying completed paperwork from which they were issued legitimate FCC ham radio licenses.

And those names added on as failures to make the numbers come out right? Most likely they were taken from a nearby telephone book with the allegedly corrupt VE's making out the answer sheets in their name. These were probably people who never even knew

that their names were being used in the commission of a federal crime until interviewed by government investigators.

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#### LICENSE PRICES IN LA-LA LAND

What was the cost of getting a ham license this way? If you believe the talk on some Los Angeles repeaters, the word is that a Novice or No-Code Technician went for \$250, a General was priced at \$500 and an Advanced Class ticket at \$750. And the Amateur Extra -- the grand-daddy of them all -- the Amateur Extra came with a minimum \$1000 price tag, but it would go as high as the applicant would be willing to pay.

The FCC is currently limiting its investigation to the period from the Spring of 1992 to the late winter of 1994. This is a period of about two years. Some in Los Angeles believe its been going on a lot longer. Possibly dating back to the early 1980's.

If its proven that all of those being investigated were actively selling ham licenses on a weekly basis for the entire time period, and figuring just one test session a week for each V-E team, the take even then becomes astronomical. In fact, its a figure that's so mind boggling that the internal Revenue Service might even show some interest if its found that no taxes were paid on this income.

Stay tuned. Obviously this story is not over yet.

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#### CALIFORNIA LICENSE

Also from California comes word that the FCC's Los Angeles Office recently responded to a complaint from the ARRL's Amateur Auxiliary that will probably cost an unlicensed operator some big bucks. The Amateur Auxiliary is a volunteer arm of the American Radio Relay League. It was called in to investigate after it received reports that an allegedly unlicensed amateur radio was promoting his brand of unlicensed operations on the ham bands.

The FCC says that he was using his station to broadcasting a message that citizens of California need not be licensed by the FCC because amateur radio is not interstate commerce. He was also heard issuing his own "California licenses" with call signs using an SC prefix. The SC obviously standing for Southern California.

So the FCC just let him rattle on while the agency's engineers used direction-finding techniques to located his station. The government says that it will soon be issuing him a hefty Notice of Apparent Liability for his own, personally licensed, unlicensed operation. The name of the suspect is being withheld pending this punitive action by the FCC.

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#### PETER I OPERATOR PLEADS GUILTY TO BANK FRAUD

Robert Wilber, N4GCK, of Ypsilanti, Michigan and one of the operators on last February's Dxpeditio to Peter One Island 3Y0PI operation, has pleaded guilty to bank fraud and mail theft. According to a report in the Ann Arbor News, under a plea bargain agreement Wilber will receive a sentence of 24 to 37 months in federal prison. He will then be subject to three to five years of supervised probation following his release.

The paper that said Wilber took checks totaling some \$113,000 from the mailbox of a University of Michigan professor and cashed them. He was photographed at an automatic teller machine and his photo appeared in local papers on December 20th, 1993. But Wilber avoided arrest long enough to join the expedition to Peter One. He surrendered on his return, having spent all the stolen money, the newspaper said.

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#### CB BLOWHARD

The July issue of Popular Communications magazine reports that a CBer in the Salem Oregon area has turned to broadcasting. The problem is that the broadcasting is taking place in the middle of the 27 MHz Class D, CB band.

Writing in his CB Scene column, Bill Sanders says that this latest CB bandit comes onto CB Channel 10 every Sunday evening around 7 PM local time. He offers no identification, and his transmissions consist of the operator pouring out his personal rage on all sorts of political matters. Bill says that the one way transmissions can continue for as long as 90 minutes with no time out for commercial breaks.

And late word into Newsline is that the FCC's Seattle office has now become involved in the case.

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#### INTERFERENCE TO BREATHING MONITOR

A legally operating Texas citizens radio operator has been ordered off the air because the FCC cannot figure out what to do about his signal that's causing RFI to a neighbors infant monitor.

The Dallas Office responded to a complaint that the CB radio station was believed to be a potential source of interference to an infant apnea breathing monitor. An infant apnea monitor is really nothing more than a cheepie one-way intercom operating in the 48 MHz band along with cordless telephones, childrens toy CB sets and two way wireless intercom sets.

Anyhow, it seems that the parents of the newborn relayed the fears to their physician that the neighbor's CB transmissions could desensitize the monitor so that it would fail to alarm if the baby stopped breathing. FCC investigators inspected the CB radio station to insure that no overpowered operation was present. Even though they found nothing wrong the FCC engineered unilaterally ordered the 11 meter CB station to cease operations until the agency can determine the monitor's desensitization susceptibility from its manufacturer.

At airtime its not known if the unidentified CB operator will be appealing the government order.

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#### NEW ENFORCEMENT TOOL

The Federal Communications Commission has shown off a new vehicle equipped with two computers, a color printer, complete with a satellite receiver in the trunk. This car when driven through cities and neighborhoods can detect unlicensed radio signals and signals that cause malicious interference.

By months end the FCC will have ten such cars, each installed with \$75,000.00 worth of electronic equipment. The Commission would not say which field offices will get the first cars. The goal is to provide each Field Office with at least two of these cars.

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#### REACT CONVENTION

REACT International's 1994 national convention is slated for July 18th to the 22nd at the Somerset New Jersey Radisson Hotel. The convention is being hosted by the Garden State Council of REACT teams.

For those of you not aware, REACT is a citizens radio group that used to operate primarily on the 27 Mhz Class D citizens band. While some CB operation is still a part of REACT, these days its members primarily uses General Mobile Radio Service frequencies to provide all sorts of public assistance. While a ham license is nor required for participation in REACT, many hams have joined the organization with some holding high ranking positions in its structure.

If you are a REACT member or interested in learning more about becoming a member, this is probably a gathering well worth attending.

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#### NORM CHALFIN RETIRES

Our heartiest congratulations to our close friend and colleague here at Newsline, Dr. Norm Chalfin, K6PGX, on his retirement from the Jet Propulsion Lab on Tuesday June the 21st. In addition to his administering the Newsline support fund -- a fund that he created some fifteen years ago -- K6PGX has also worked closely with the folks at AMSAT to chronicle in photographs and slides much of the history of the organization and its numerous achievements.

To his family here at Newsline, he is a very special person. He showed up at a time that he was needed most, volunteered to find a way to help get support from the Amateur Radio community to keep the then Westlink Radio Network in production. He set up the support fund. He worked closely with attorney Bernard Heinz WA2BAK to walk us through our incorporation under the banner of the Holmsburg Amateur Radio Club. Norm also handled all of the paperwork when we changed our name to Newsline and even gave us use of his personal post office box in Pasadena -- an address that has become synonymous with the Newsline name.

We asked K6PGX what he plans to do now? Norm, who is a young eighty years old, says that he will stay with Newsline a bit longer -- at least until a new Support Fund Administrator can be found. After that, who knows.

K6PGX has good health, a wonderful wife and family, and a lot of time now, to enjoy it all.

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And for this week, that's all from the Amateur Radio Newsline. You can write to us at Post Office Box 463 in Pasadena, California 91102.

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